

ZECHARIAH

INTRODUCTION

1. Title. The book is named after the man whose prophecies it bears. The name Zechariah, Heb. *Zekaryah*, means “Yahweh remembers,” or “Yahweh has remembered.” The name was common among the Jews.

2. Authorship. Zechariah was probably a Levite, and may have been a priest (see Neh. 12:16; cf. Zech. 1:1). The fact that in Ezra 5:1; 6:14 Zechariah is called “the son of Iddo” may be accounted for by the free use of “son” for grandson (see on 1 Chron. 2:7).

It is almost certain that Zechariah was born in Babylonia. He began his ministry some 16 years after the return from the Captivity, that is, in 520/519 B.C. If he had been born subsequent to the return, his call to the prophetic ministry would have come at a very early age. The latest date given in his prophecy is the 4th year of Darius (ch. 7:1). However, it is most probable that the prophet Zechariah lived to see the completion of the Temple a few years later, in 515 B.C. (see on Ezra 6:15).

3. Historical Setting. Zechariah was contemporaneous with Haggai (Zech. 1:1; Haggai 1:1). For the historical setting see the Introduction to Haggai (pp. 1073, 1074). See also Vol. III, pp. 320–322.

4. Theme. Zechariah, as well as Haggai, was appointed by God to arouse to action the Jews who, because of enemy opposition that came to a head under the False Smerdis (522 B.C.), had left off the building of the Temple (see Vol. III, pp. 70, 71). Zechariah’s prophecies “came at a time of great uncertainty and anxiety,” when “it seemed to the leaders as if the permission granted the Jews to rebuild was about to be withdrawn” (PK 580). His messages, dealing with the work of God and the divine plans for the restoration, were designed to bring encouragement to the flagging zeal of the Jews. As a result of the inspiring messages and leadership of Haggai and Zechariah the Temple was soon completed (Ezra 6:14, 15).

Zechariah’s messages, setting forth Jerusalem’s glorious future, were conditional (Zech 6:15). Because of the failure of the Jews, when they returned from captivity, to meet the spiritual conditions upon which their prosperity was based, the prophecies were not fulfilled in their original intent. However, certain features will be fulfilled in the Christian church (see pp. 30–36).

5. Outline.

- I. Promises of Restoration, Zech. 1:1 to 6:15.
 - A. Introduction and appeal to follow the Lord, 1:1–6.
 - B. Eight visions, 1:7 to 6:8.
 - 1. First vision: the horsemen, 1:7–17.
 - 2. Second vision: the four horns and four carpenters, 1:18–21.
 - 3. Third vision: the man with the measuring line, 2:1–13.
 - 4. Fourth vision: Joshua and Satan, 3:1–10.
 - 5. Fifth vision: the golden candlestick and two olive trees, 4:1–14.
 - 6. Sixth vision: the flying roll, 5:1–4.
 - 7. Seventh vision: the ephah and the woman, 5:5–11.
 - 8. Eighth vision: the four chariots, 6:1–8.
 - C. The advent and work of Christ, the Branch, 6:9–15.
- II. Reproof for Sin and Appeal for Righteousness, 7:1 to 8:23.

- A. Hypocritical fasting denounced, 7:1–14.
 - 1. The deputation from Bethel, 7:1–3.
 - 2. Insincere fasting condemned, 7:4–7.
 - 3. True religion defined, 7:8–10.
 - 4. Willful rebellion and its results, 7:11–14.
- B. Restoration on the basis of obedience, 8:1–23.
- III. The Destruction of the Enemy and Deliverance for Israel, 9:1 to 14:21.
 - A. First burden, 9:1 to 11:17.
 - 1. The neighboring heathen destroyed, 9:1–8.
 - 2. The righteous King over a united Israel, 9:9–17.
 - 3. God, not idols, the source of triumph, 10:1–7.
 - 4. God's people gathered from all parts of the world, 10:8–12.
 - 5. The parable of the shepherd, 11:1–17.
 - B. Second burden, 12:1 to 14:21.
 - 1. Enemy nations overthrown, 12:1–9.
 - 2. The spirit of grace and of supplications poured out, 12:10–14.
 - 3. The spiritual purgation of Jerusalem, 13:1–6.
 - 4. The smiting of the Good Shepherd, 13:7–9.
 - 5. The purgation of Jerusalem by war, 14:1–7.
 - 6. Land renewed and the Lord acknowledged as King, 14:8–11.
 - 7. Judgments upon the heathen, 14:12–15.
 - 8. Judgments upon the remnant who refuse to worship, 14:16–21.

CHAPTER 1

1 *Zechariah exhorteth to repentance.* 7 *The vision of the horses.* 12 *At the prayer of the angel comfortable promises are made to Jerusalem.* 18 *The vision of the four horns, and the four carpenters.*

1. Eighth month. Called Bul before the Captivity (1 Kings 6:38); later Marcheshvan or Heshvan; our October–November.

Second year of Darius. 520 B.C. (see Vol. III, pp. 98, 99). For a brief history of Darius I see Vol. III, pp. 70–72.

Son of Iddo. On the genealogy of Zechariah see p. 1085.

2. Displeased. Heb. *qaṣaph*, a stronger term than the translation suggests. *Qaṣaph* is most frequently translated “to be wroth” (see Deut. 9:19; Isa. 47:6; etc.).

3. Turn ye. God pleads with the people to repent, and thus to receive the divine favor that would enable them safely and surely to carry on the work of rebuilding the Temple (see p. 1085). The need of repentance and reformation is often stressed by Zechariah (see chs. 3:7; 6:15; 7:7–10; 8:16, 17).

Saith the Lord. The threefold repetition of this phrase is doubtless for the sake of emphasis.

4. Former prophets. See 2 Kings 17:13, 14; 2 Chron. 36:15–17; Jer. 25:3–9; cf. Jer. 35:15. Men should learn from the experiences of those who have lived before (see Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:11).

5. Your fathers. Consider their fate lest what befell them come upon you.

Live for ever. The prophets were mortal like those to whom they preached. Nevertheless their words were the words of God. Hence those words were eternal and would certainly come to pass.

6. Take hold of. Heb. *naśag*, “overtake.” The word is thus translated in Gen. 44:4; Deut. 28:2, 15, 45. The messages and “statutes” would eventually bring the threatened chastisement.

Returned. Heb. *shub*, translated “repent” in 1 Kings 8:47; Eze. 14:6; 18:30, and could be so rendered here (see RSV).

7. Eleventh month. The date here given is approximately Feb. 15, 519 B.C., by Julian reckoning (see Vol. III, p. 99). About three months earlier Zechariah had begun his prophetic ministry (Zech. 1:1). The next date that appears in the book is in ch. 7:1. The eight visions recorded in chs. 1:8 to 6:8 were doubtless given in the interval. Some assume they were all given in one “night” (see v. 8), but this cannot be proved.

8. I saw. The first vision was designed to give confidence in God’s gracious purpose to restore His people. It gave assurance that the Gentile nations would be overthrown; and that despite the present state of Israel, God’s merciful purpose would be carried out on condition the people do their part (see ch. 6:15).

In the interpretation of the visions of Zechariah it should be borne in mind that, although the general teaching of the vision seems to be clear, the significance of the details is not always evident. This is due, in part, to the fact that visions, like parables, contain certain features needed to fill out the narrative or presentation, that do not necessarily have interpretative value. Other features are left unexplained by the prophet and by other inspired writers; hence their significance cannot be known with certainty (see on Eze. 1:4; see Vol. III, p. 1111).

The series of eight visions recorded in chs. 1:7 to 6:8 presents a connected prophetic narrative setting forth the purpose of God for the Jews upon their return from Babylonian captivity and culminating in the coming of Messiah and the establishment of His kingdom (see pp. 26–31). Zechariah was given this series of visions at a time of great discouragement, when it seemed that the enemies of God’s people were about to bring the work of restoration to a complete halt (see PK 582). These messages were designed to encourage the returned exiles and to inspire them to go forward in faith with their appointed task.

The first vision (ch. 1:7–17) reveals God’s plan for Israel at a standstill. The heathen nations of earth are “at ease,” but God announces His purpose to restore the Temple as His “house” and to “choose Jerusalem” as the agency through which His purpose for the salvation of men shall be accomplished. The second vision (ch. 1:18–21) pictures the damage Israel as a nation has suffered as the result of captivity and proclaims God’s intention to repair all the damage that has been done. The third vision (ch. 2:1–13) assures the Jews of the divine presence and blessing in the work of restoration and in the accomplishment of Israel’s mission to the world. In the fourth vision (ch. 3:1–10) God assures His people that He will interpose to protect them from their archenemy, Satan, and will pardon their sins, which have heretofore afforded Satan an opportunity to interfere with the accomplishment of God’s will for them as His people (see pp. 27, 28). The fifth vision (ch. 4:1–14) sets forth the means by which the restoration of Jerusalem and the transformation of character are to be accomplished—“by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts” (v. 6). The sixth vision (ch. 5:1–4) presents the process by which sin is to be ferreted out from among God’s people. The seventh vision (ch. 5:5–11) pictures the complete and final removal of sin and sinners from among the chosen nation. The eighth vision (ch. 6:1–8) represents God supervising the affairs of earth for the accomplishment

of His divine purpose as set forth in the preceding visions, and thus assuring Israel of success in their mission.

Following the eighth vision the prophet presents an inspired picture of the coming of Messiah, “a priest upon his throne” (ch. 6:13), and the ingathering of the nations of earth to the true God (v. 15). All this—as set forth in chs. 1:7 to 6:15—will surely come to pass if Israel diligently obeys the voice of the Lord (ch. 6:15); cf. Deut. 28:1, 14). For comment on the conditional nature of these prophetic visions see p. 34, and for Israel’s failure as a nation to realize the promised blessings, pp. 30–33.

Red horse. The prophet does not explain the significance of the color, and speculation is profitless.

Myrtle. An evergreen bearing white flowers and an aromatic fruit from which perfumes were made. The tree is common in Palestine.

Bottom. Heb. *mešulah*, “an abyss,” “a precipice,” here probably the name of a geographical site or of a valley.

Speckled. Heb. *šeruqqim*, which may mean “sorrel” (see RSV). Another suggestion is that it means “bright red.” The significance of the colors, if any, is not evident. Commentators have made various conjectures such as that the three colors represent the three world powers, Babylon, Persia and Greece. Inasmuch as the interpreter of the vision makes no mention of this feature of the prophetic presentation, it may be best to leave the colors unexplained. They may have had no further significance than to distinguish the groups of couriers.

9. That talked with me. That is, the interpreting angel. He is to be distinguished from “the man that stood among the myrtle trees” (v. 10), who is also called “the angel of the Lord” (v. 11).

10. Through the earth. These couriers are represented as giving a report to the great Ruler of the universe concerning affairs on earth, particularly with respect to Israel as God’s chosen people suffering captivity and oppression at the hands of the heathen nations round about. They have already accomplished their mission and are ready to report.

11. At rest. God’s program seems to be stalemated. The nations are doing nothing to bring relief and help to the people of God. It appears, in fact, that the permission to rebuild is about to be recalled (see p. 1074; PK 579, 580).

12. Not have mercy. God’s people were in a state of insecurity and discouragement. The Temple remained in desolation, Jerusalem in ruins.

Threescore and ten. Some think the reference is to the 70 years mentioned by Jeremiah (Jer. 25:12; 29:10; see Vol. III, p. 97). Others reckon back from the date of the vision in 519 B.C. (see on Zech. 1:7) and arrive at the date 589/588, when Nebuchadnezzar began his siege of Jerusalem (see on 2 Kings 25:1; see Vol. III, pp. 99, 100).

13. Comfortable words. The vision was designed to bring encouragement and cheer to the people.

14. Jealous. Compare Joel 2:18.

Zion. Here evidently used as a synonym for the entire city of Jerusalem (see on Ps. 48:2).

15. Heathen. Or, “nations.”

At ease. See on v. 11. Although God had punished the Israelites because of their sins, He had been only “a little displeased” and had planned to limit the judgments. On the other hand, the “heathen,” going further than God intended, essayed to put the Israelites permanently under subjection (see Isa. 10:5–19).

16. Shall be built. Verses 16, 17 show God’s gracious designs for the remnant. The predictions were fulfilled in part. The Temple was rebuilt and Jerusalem restored. But the prosperity here indicated was never fully realized. The people failed to fulfill the spiritual conditions upon which their temporal prosperity was based. Nevertheless the opportunity was theirs. The vision was designed to offer encouragement and to present a strong inducement to them to take advantage of their neglected privileges. See pp. 30–33. God’s plan for Israel, temporarily interrupted by the Captivity, was now to go forward again, and Israel was to be restored to the privileges and responsibilities of the covenant relationship (see p. 31).

18. Four horns. The second vision (vs. 18–21; in the Hebrew, ch. 2:1–4) shows the means by which God planned to fulfill His purpose. The horns are clearly defined as the powers that had “scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem” (v. 19; see PK 581). The number “four” may denote universality as suggested by the four points of the compass (see Dan. 8:8; 11:4) to which Israel had been scattered (Zech. 1:21; cf. ch. 2:6; see on ch. 1:8).

19. Scattered. See on v. 18.

20. Carpenters. Heb. *charashim*, “artisans.” The word denotes workers in stone (Ex. 28:11), wood (2 Sam. 5:11), metal (1 Sam. 13:19), etc. Many conjectures have been made as to the identity of these four artisans. The number “four” may denote simply “the four corners of the earth” whither the outcasts of Israel had been scattered (Isa. 11:12). The artisans represented “the agencies used by the Lord in restoring His people and the house of His worship” (PK 581).

21. Fray. From the Heb. *charad*, which, in the form here found, means “to frighten,” “to terrify” (RSV). See also on v. 18.

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

12–16PK 580

13 PK 583

17–21PK 581

CHAPTER 2

1 *God, in the care of Jerusalem, sendeth to measure it.* 6 *The redemption of Zion.* 10 *The promise of God’s presence.*

1. Behold a man. The third vision shows the triumph of God’s plan. The glorious prospect here presented would have been realized by Israel if the people had fully cooperated with the program of Heaven. The man with the measuring line is not identified, nor is it necessary to the understanding of the vision that he be.

2. To measure Jerusalem. The symbolical act gave assurance that Jerusalem would be rebuilt.

3. Another angel. There are thus four characters in the symbolic vision, the man with the measuring line, the prophet, and two angels.

4. This young man. Regarding the identity of this young man two views have been held: (1) That he is the man with the measuring line (v. 1). According to this view the fact that the young man is on his way to measure the city implies that he is going to

circumscribe its limits. He is to be interrupted and told that the new city is not to be circumscribed, that it is going to overflow its former boundaries and be like an unwallled city. (2) That he is Zechariah. This conclusion is probably based on the idea that the message delivered to the “young man” was really intended for Zechariah. However, regardless of who received the message in the symbolic vision, the relating of the vision would later convey the divine message to those for whom it was intended.

The word translated “this” (*hallaz*) may also be translated “that,” as in 2 Kings 4:25; 23:17. The pronoun is therefore of no help in identifying the “young man.”

5. Wall of fire. No material walls are needed, inasmuch as God Himself will be the city’s protection (see Ps. 125:2).

6. Come forth. Compare Jer. 51:6, 45. This was a new call to those Jews who had not returned to Jerusalem under the decree of Cyrus (Ezra 1:1–4), to come to Zion, to “flee from” the troublous times that lay ahead in the Persian realm. There were still many Jewish exiles in Babylon, not a few of whom were living in ease and wealth. Their prosperity caused them to shrink from the uncertain future that the return to Jerusalem seemed to offer.

Land of the north. Babylon is often so designated in the OT because the invaders from that country entered Palestine from the north (see on Jer. 1:14, 15; 4:6).

7. Deliver thyself, O Zion. Or, “escape to Zion” (RSV). It was God’s purpose to visit judgments upon those nations that held His people captive. See on v. 6.

Daughter of Babylon. The same phrase appears in Ps. 137:8. Compare the expression “daughter of Zion” (Isa. 52:2; Lam. 4:22; Zech. 2:10).

8. After the glory. The meaning of this phrase is obscure. The reading “after his glory sent me” (RSV) is obtained by altering the Hebrew text. According to the altered text a vision of the divine glory commissioned the prophet.

Apple. Heb. *babah*. The word occurs only here and probably signified the eyeball. The eye is extremely sensitive to harm and of inestimable value to its owner. Every blow that strikes the saints strikes their Lord (see Isa. 63:9; Acts. 9:1–5; cf. Matt. 10:40; 25:34–46).

9. Shake. Heb. *nuph*, “to move to and fro.” The waving of the hand signifies the exercise of power (see Isa. 11:15; 19:16). The Lord pledges to turn the tables so as to make those whom Israel has served a spoil to His people.

Hath sent me. The credentials of the true prophet are the fulfillment of his predictions (see Deut. 18:21, 22).

10. Rejoice. In view of the glorious prospect, Zion is called upon to rejoice. If the people had heeded the messages of its prophets, the city would have “stood forth in the pride of prosperity, the queen of kingdoms” (DA 577). God would have dwelt in the midst of her and Jerusalem would have become the world’s diadem of glory. With the failure of Israel and the accomplishment of God’s purposes in the spiritual seed, the Christian church (see Vol. IV, pp. 36, 37), the ground of rejoicing is now the New Jerusalem “coming down from God out of heaven” (Rev. 21:2).

11. Shall be joined. Compare Isa. 14:1; Micah 4:2. God purposed that men from all nations, observing the prosperity of Israel and the advantages of serving the true God, would thereby be led to join themselves to the Lord (see pp. 28, 29). But Israel after the Exile, as had Israel before the Exile, refused to heed the light sent from Heaven. God has

now commissioned the Christian church to preach the gospel in all the world, so that “many” from all lands may believe and be saved (see Matt. 24:14; 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 1:8; Rev. 14:6–12).

13. *Be silent.* In anticipation of these mighty and glorious events the world is charged to wait in becoming awe and reverence (see Ps. 76:8, 9). The assurance is given that God will rouse Himself from His state of apparent inactivity to punish the wicked and to save His people (see Ps. 44:23–26).

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

1–5PK 581

6–9PK 599

89 COL 166; Ed 257; GC 626; PK 545

CHAPTER 3

1 *Under the type of Joshua, the restoration of the church, 8 Christ the Branch is promised.*

1. *He shewed me.* The fourth vision (vs. 1–10) was given to show the power of Christ “to vanquish the accuser of His people” (PK 583). It was given at a time when “the steady advancement made by the builders of the Temple greatly discomfited and alarmed the hosts of evil” (PK 582). See on ch. 1:8.

Joshua. The first high priest after the Captivity. He is called Jeshua in Ezra 2:2, a transliteration of the Aramaic form of the name, instead of the Hebrew, as here. See further on Ezra 2:2. In this vision the high priest represents Israel standing before God.

Angel of the Lord. That is, “the Angel which is the Lord,” meaning Christ (cf. Jude 9; see PK 584; see on Ex. 23:20, 21).

Satan. Heb. *haśśatan*, literally, “the adversary.” The word comes from the verb *śatan*, which means “to accuse,” “to act, as an adversary.” The verb occurs in Ps. 38:20; 71:13; 109:4, 20, 29; Zech. 3:1. The noun is applied to an earthly adversary in 1 Sam. 29:4; 2 Sam. 19:22; 1 Kings 5:4; 11:14, 23, 25; Ps. 109:6, and to an angel in Num. 22:22, 32. In each of these references the Hebrew noun is without the article. With the article the noun occurs 14 times in Job 1:6 to 2:7, and 3 times in Zech. 3:1, 2. In each of these instances it is translated “Satan.” Once the noun is translated “Satan” when it is without the article in the Hebrew (1 Chron. 21:1).

To resist. Heb. *śatan*, “to accuse,” “to act as an adversary” (see above under “Satan”). While Joshua was interceding before God for his people, Satan stood close by to oppose and thwart his endeavors by bringing against Joshua and his people the charge of sinfulness (cf. 1 Peter 5:8; Rev. 12:10). He pointed to the transgressions of Israel as a reason why the people should not be restored to divine favor (see PK 583; cf. Zech. 1:11; 2:12). They did not deserve to be restored to the covenant relationship (see on Zech. 1:16).

2. *Rebuke thee.* It was true that God’s people had grievously sinned. But they had suffered the chastisement of the Exile, and many had been led to repentance and humiliation. Under these conditions it was certainly proper to extend them divine favor.

This. Or, “this one.” Joshua is referred to, but he also represented the people.

Brand. Heb. *’ud*, “a log,” “a stump,” originally perhaps a bent stick used to stir up the fire. The word occurs in the OT only here, in Isa. 7:4, and in Amos 4:11. The scorching fires of the Captivity would have eventually consumed the chosen people had not God

moved on the hearts of heathen kings to show favor to His scattered children and had not some of them been willing to respond to the call of God to flee out of Babylon (Jer. 51:6, 45; cf. Zech. 2:6).

3. *Filthy garments.* Signifying the defilement of sin (cf. Isa. 64:6).

4. *He answered.* The removal of the filthy garments signified the remission of sin and restoration to God's favor. The new raiment represented the imputed righteousness of Christ (PK 584).

5. *A fair mitre.* Literally, "a pure turban," or "a clean turban." The word translated "fair" is from the verb *tahar*, which has various meanings: "to be clean," "to be pure," "to be ceremonially clean," "to be pronounced clean." The turban anciently prescribed for the high priest had on it the inscription "holiness to the Lord" (Ex. 28:36–38). The placing of the "pure turban" upon Joshua signified that his transgressions had been pardoned and that he was qualified to function in his holy office. Priest and people were restored to divine favor (v. 9; see on v. 1).

6. *Protested.* Better, "warned."

7. *Walk.* Great blessings would ensue upon obedience. Compare the promise to Solomon (1 Kings 3:14).

These that stand by. Attending angels (see PK 585).

8. *Hear now.* The important nature of the pledge about to be given demanded the priest's full attention.

Men wondered at. Literally, "men of a wonder." The Heb. *mopheth*, here translated "wondered at," is used of the wonders that Moses was to do before Pharaoh (Ex. 4:21; cf. Ex. 7:3, 9; 11:9, 10). *Mopheth* is also frequently translated "sign" (1 Kings 13:3, 5; 2 Chron. 32:24, 31; Eze. 12:6; etc.). As Ezekiel was a sign (Heb. *mopheth*) to his generation (Eze. 12:6, 11; 24:24, 27), so the Israelites of the restoration were to be a demonstration of what God was willing to do for those who cooperated with the purposes of Heaven. They were to be "honored as the chosen of Heaven among the nations of the earth" (PK 585).

My servant. A title frequently given to the Messiah (see on Isa. 41:8).

Branch. Heb. *semach*, "a sprout," "a growth," a symbol of the Messiah (see Jer. 23:5; 33:15), who was to be the glorious Shoot that would spring forth from the house of David.

9. *The stone.* The symbolism is not clearly explained. Commentators have made various suggestions such as that the stone (Heb. *'eben*) refers to Christ, as in Isa. 8:14, or to the kingdom of Christ, as in Dan. 2:34, 35, 44, or that it refers to Zerubbabel as the "signet" (Haggai 2:23). However, the only immediate hint as to the meaning of the symbolism seems to be in the words, "I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day." The central teaching of the vision has been the removal of guilt from Joshua and from the people. There may be a connection between the "one stone" and the "one day."

10. *Under the vine.* A symbol of peace and security, joy and prosperity (see Isa. 65:17–25; Micah 4:1–5).

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

- 1, 2 TM 465
 1–3COL 166; 5T 468
 1–4MB 117; PK 320
 1–5TM 275
 1–7TM 22
 2 GC 484; MH 161; MM 131; PK 587, 589; PP 168; TM 249; 5T 469, 471, 474, 495; 9T 240
 2–5PK 584
 2–6FE 274
 2–7TM 40; 5T 469
 3 PK 583
 3–7COL 169
 4 PK 587; TM 517; 2T 453; 5T 471, 472
 4, 5 COL 206; PK 591; 5T 475
 7 COL 207, 389; PK 584, 587; 5T 471; 6T 298
 8 PK 585, 592; 5T 469, 476

CHAPTER 4

- 1 *By the golden candlestick is foreshewed the good success of Zerubbabel's foundation. 11 By the two olive trees the two anointed ones.*

1. Walked me. This incident marks the transition from one vision to the other. The prophet was probably in a state of deep meditation, and now his attention is directed to a new symbolic presentation. Compare Dan. 8:18; 10:8, 9; see on ch. 1:8.

2. Candlestick. The symbolism is evidently borrowed from the candlestick in the sanctuary. The one in the ancient tabernacle had seven lamps (Ex. 25:31–40). Solomon's Temple had ten candlesticks, five on the right and five on the left (1 Kings 7:49). The present candlestick is not like the former, however, and has its own distinctive lesson to teach.

Bowl. This held the oil, which was fed to the seven lamps through seven pipes.

3. Olive trees. According to v. 12 these trees supplied oil to the central bowl, which, in turn, supplied the lamps.

6. Zerubbabel. For the identity and work of Zerubbabel see Ezra 2:1 to 4:5; see also p. 1073. Zerubbabel here represents the civil leadership and administration, as Joshua (Zech. 3:1) represents the religious leadership of the nation.

By my spirit. The oil furnished by the olive trees (v. 3) typified the Holy Spirit (see COL 408). Divine grace alone could overcome all the obstacles that confronted the rebuilders (see Vol. IV, p. 1073) of Jerusalem. Zerubbabel and his companions were depressed by their feeble ability and scant resources to carry on the work of restoration against the opposition of their enemies. The vision showed that God's purposes for Israel would be attained not by human "might" or "power," but by His own Spirit and His own power.

7. Great mountain. Symbolic of the seemingly insuperable difficulties Zerubbabel had to meet in accomplishing his purpose (see on Isa. 2:2).

Headstone. Zerubbabel is given the assurance that he will finish the work of restoration by putting on the headstone, or topstone, thereof. Compare 7T 170.

Shoutings. These are doubtless the cries of rejoicing of those witnessing the placing of the headstone.

9. Laid the foundation. See on Ezra 3:8.

Finish it. See on Ezra 6:15.

10. Day of small things. That is, the meager progress thus far achieved.

They shall rejoice. That is, at the accomplishment of that which appeared impossible.

With those seven. The word “with” is supplied. The sentence may be translated, “These seven, they are the eyes of the Lord running to and fro in all the earth.” The reference is doubtless to the seven lamps (v. 2). They are here made a symbol of the omniscience and omnipresence of God. “He that keepeth Israel” neither slumbers nor sleeps (Ps. 121:4). From His great throne above He superintends the affairs on this earth and works out the purposes of His will. Nothing escapes His notice (see Ps. 139:1–12; see on Dan. 4:17).

11. What are these? The significance of the two olive trees (v. 3) had not yet been explained.

14. Two anointed ones. They are described as standing “by the Lord.” In the symbolism the olive trees provided oil for the lamps (v. 12). The oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit (see on v. 6). The anointed ones therefore represent the heavenly instrumentalities through which the Holy Spirit is imparted to human beings who are wholly consecrated to His service. “The mission of the two anointed ones is to communicate light and power to God’s people” (TM 510). Those who receive such a heavenly imparting are expected, in turn, to communicate these blessings to others.

John the revelator also mentions two olive trees and parallels them with “the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth” (Rev. 11:4). By these symbols he identifies the two witnesses which represent “the Scriptures of the Old and the New Testament” (GC 267). Hence, although the two prophets saw similar symbols, the significance of the symbols was not identical.

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

1–14COL 407, 408; CS 261; TM 188, 377; 6T 296, 458, 459

1–4COL 407; TM 509

1–6PK 593

1–96T 458

2, 3 COL 418; 6T 11, 116, 117, 123; 7T 249

6 AA 17; COL 67, 407, 408; Ev 19; GC 232, 529; GW 251, 383; LS 202; PK 596; TM 188, 264, 509, 512; 2T 608; 4T 535; 5T 668; 6T 50, 74; 7T 90; WM 177

7 PK 594, 595; 7T 170

9 PK 595, 596

10 CS 48; PK 595; 7T 169

10–146T 459

11 TM 510

11–14CW 114; Ev 282; MM 184; PK 593; TM 338, 340; 6T 11, 116, 117, 123; 7T 148, 154, 249

12 COL 407; 7T 195

14 COL 408; TM 510

CHAPTER 5

1 *By the flying roll is shewed the curse of thieves and swearers. 5 By a woman pressed in an ephah, the final damnation of Babylon.*

1. I turned. In the sixth vision (vs. 1–4), by means of a flying roll, Zechariah is shown how God will deal with those in Israel who refuse the “change of raiment” (ch. 3:4) and who rebel against the leadership of His Spirit (ch. 4:6). See on ch. 1:8.

Flying. Probably intended to signify that it was accomplishing its work.

Roll. For a description of ancient writing materials see Vol. I, p. 31. The roll, or scroll, that Zechariah saw was probably made of leather. Inasmuch as the roll is declared to be “the curse,” it is assumed that it contained writing.

2. He said. That is, the interpreting angel.

The length. Inasmuch as Zechariah was able to estimate the dimensions, the roll must have appeared entirely open. By modern measure the roll was about 17 by 34 ft. Inasmuch as these dimensions agree with those of the holy place of the tabernacle (see on Ex. 26:1), and with those of the porch of Solomon’s Temple (1 Kings 6:3), some have sought to show a connection between the “flying roll” and the sanctuary. However, even though the curse sprang from the transgression of the tables of stone containing the Ten Commandments found in the tabernacle and in the Temple of Solomon, there is no way of proving that such a connection was to be represented by the foregoing similarity in dimensions. The roll was of unusual dimensions and contained a very large writing area. The dimensions were therefore probably noted to show the magnitude of the curse.

3. Stealeth. Stealing represents offenses against men, and swearing falsely, offense against God (see on Matt. 5:33–37). These two evils may have been widely practiced among the Jews who returned from the Exile, and were thus singled out as examples of a general declension of morality.

Cut off. In order to accomplish God’s purposes it was necessary that Israel of the restoration be pure. The vision of Joshua’s change of raiment (ch. 3) pointed to the divine provisions for dealing with sin. Pardon would be granted to every repentant soul. Those who accepted the provisions would be clothed with the perfect righteousness of Christ. However, in order to appropriate the robe of Christ’s righteousness, men would be required to forsake their evil deeds (see COL 3:16). Those who refused would be visited by the curse pronounced by the flying roll.

4. Enter into. There would be no escape for the sinner. The curse would enter the house of the thief and the perjurer and “remain” in the abode of the transgressor till it had accomplished its purpose, including the destruction of the occupants of the house.

5. What is this. The seventh vision (vs. 5–11) symbolizes the removal of iniquity from the land. See on ch. 1:8.

6. Ephah. A dry measure, equivalent to 5.81 U.S. gal. (22 liters). Since a vessel of this size was not large enough to contain a woman (v. 7), some have suggested that shape rather than volume was the intent of the description.

Resemblance. Literally, “eye.” A change of one letter in the Hebrew gives the translation “iniquity,” the reading found in the LXX and adopted by the RSV.

7. Talent. Heb. *kikkar*, literally, “a round disk”; here used to describe the leaden circular cover of the ephah. When this cover was lifted Zechariah saw a woman sitting in the ephah.

8. Wickedness. This woman personified the iniquity of backslidden Israel, which God was seeking to remove. The vision is thus related to the preceding one (see on vs. 1–4). Some, in fact, consider the two visions as one. However, they are actually two representations.

Cast it. Better, “cast her.” Apparently in the representation the woman attempted to leave the ephah when the lid was lifted, but the angel flung her back into it.

Weight of lead. That is, the leaden cover. The cover was doubtless weighted for the purpose of keeping the woman confined in the ephah.

9. Two women. Why women with the wings of a stork are chosen to represent the agency by which the iniquity will be removed, the angel does not disclose, and it is probably idle to speculate (see on ch. 1:8).

11. Shinar. Babylonia (see on Dan. 1:2). Babylon is thus represented as the place where iniquity dwells. Those who had left Babylon should have left their iniquities there. However, even now, there was provision for sin (see Zech. 3:1–5; see on ch. 5:3). Even as God’s chosen people were to be gathered out of Babylon, those among His people who refused to have their character transformed were to be gathered out of Israel and removed to Babylon.

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

1–4Ed 144

CHAPTER 6

1 *The vision of the four chariots.* 9 *By the crowns of Joshua is shewed the temple and kingdom of Christ the Branch.*

1. Four chariots. This is perhaps the most obscure of the eight visions. The information furnished by the interpreting angel is limited. Some have noted a similarity to the vision of ch. 1:8–11, but to what extent similarity should be pressed is open to question. No fully satisfactory explanation of the various symbols has yet been advanced. See on ch. 1:8.

Two mountains. These appeared in vision and need not necessarily represent any geographical mountains. Later the chariots are said to come from the presence of God (v. 5).

Brass. Better, “bronze,” or “copper” (see on 2 Sam. 8:8). The significance of the metal is not explained. The prophet may have sought to designate appearance rather than material. Not all features noted in a vision are necessarily of interpretative value (see on ch. 1:8).

2. Red horses. The various colors of the horses (see vs. 2, 3) distinguished the chariots dispatched in different directions (see vs. 6, 7).

5. Spirits. Heb. *ruchoth*, singular, *ruach*, a word occurring 377 times in the OT. It is translated “spirit” 232 times, “wind” 90 times, and the remaining times in a variety of ways. Many translators prefer the rendering “winds” in this verse (LXX; RSV; etc.). The identical Hebrew phrase here translated, “the four spirits of the heavens,” is rendered, “the four winds of heaven” in Dan. 8:8.

Go forth. This passage may be translated as in the RSV, “These are going forth to the four winds of heaven.”

6. North country. Because the invasion routes from Babylon entered Palestine from the north, Babylon had formerly been designated a northern power (see on Jer. 1:14, 15). The term could, as appropriately, be applied to the Persians, who had taken over the territories of Babylon. The chariots “which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth” (Zech. 6:5) doubtless represent God’s agencies operating throughout the earth, “silently, patiently working out the counsels of His own will” (see Ed 173). The delegation to the north country probably symbolized the influence exerted upon the rulers

of the Persian realm to further the work of God. It seemed at the time “as if the permission granted the Jews to rebuild was about to be withdrawn” (PK 580). The vision must have brought great encouragement to the disheartened builders, for it gave them the assurance that the mission to the north country would be successful. “These that go toward the north country have quieted my spirit in the north country” (see on v. 8). Darius issued a new decree shortly afterward, permitting the work to go forward, encouraging the enterprise by public funds, and threatening any who might oppose it (Ezra 6:7–12).

After them. Some prefer the reading “west” (see RSV), inasmuch as it would seem that the four chariots would be dispatched in the four directions. However, it is necessary to alter the Hebrew to obtain this reading. It may be that although normally the white horses were not dispatched to the north, they may now have been sent in that direction because of the crisis there (see above under “North country”). In times of emergency the agencies of Heaven combine to bring relief (see on Dan. 10:13).

7. The bay. Heb. *’amuṣṣim*, literally, “the strong ones,” or “courageous ones.” Perhaps by this expression the prophet groups the horses of all colors, although such a grouping leaves the destination of the “grisled and bay horses” (v. 3) unannounced. However, the impatience and eagerness of all the horses may have been the intent of the representation, thus showing the speed with which Heaven would interpose to dispel the prevailing uncertainty and anxiety (see on v. 6).

8. Quieted my spirit. Literally, “caused my spirit to rest.” “Spirit” (Heb. *ruach*) may here be used in the sense of “will” or “volition” (see on Eccl. 12:7). The expression may refer to accomplishment of God’s will in Persia; namely, in the securing of a decree that would be favorable to the Jews (see on Zech. 6:6). Compare ch. 1:11, 15.

9. Word of the Lord. In vs. 9–15 is portrayed a striking symbolism of the work of the Messiah. The work of restoration was to go forward to a grand climax in the coming of Messiah and the establishment of His eternal kingdom (see especially v. 13; see on ch. 1:8).

10. Take of them. In the eight visions of chs. 1:7 to 6:8 Zechariah was an observer only. It may be that the instructions here given the prophet were to be carried out as a part of the inaugural ceremony of Joshua as high priest, at the time the Temple services were reinstituted.

Of the captivity. Some have suggested that the three men were representatives from the Jews that were still in Babylon who had come with gifts for the Temple. Instead of their names the LXX gives the symbolic meaning of the three names: “the chief men,” “the useful men,” and “those that have understood it.”

Josiah. Some have suggested that he was the son of the Zephaniah of 2 Kings 25:18, who was of the “second” order of the priests during the closing years of the kingdom of Judah (see Jer. 21:1; 37:3). However, the fact that the capture of Jerusalem (see 2 Kings 25:18–21) was some 70 years in the past, makes it highly unlikely that Zephaniah was the father of the Josiah of the present narrative, unless Josiah was extremely old.

11. Joshua. See on ch. 3:1. Here, the high priest represents Messiah, as in ch. 3:1–4 he represents the people.

12. Speak unto him. That is, to Joshua.

Branch. Heb. *šemach* (see on ch. 3:8). A clear Messianic prediction and recognized as such by the Jews.

Grow up. Heb. *šamach*, “to spring forth,” “to sprout.” From *šamach* is derived *šemach*, the word translated “Branch.”

Build the temple. More than the material Temple completed by Zerubbabel (Ezra 6:14, 15) is here foretold. The prophet envisions the spiritual house (see on Zech. 6:15; cf. 1 Cor. 3:16, 17; Eph. 2:19–22; 1 Peter 2:3–5; GC 416).

13. He shall build. The repetition is doubtless for emphasis.

The glory. “To Christ belongs the glory of redemption for the fallen race” (GC 416).

Priest. Like Melchizedek, who held the double office of priest and king (Luke 1:32, 33; Heb. 5:5, 6, 10; 7:1, 2, 15–17; 8:1, 2). Christ would be priest and would eventually ascend to the “throne of his father David” (see Ps. 110:1–4). At the time of His first advent Christ qualified to serve as High Priest in the heavenly sanctuary (Heb. 2:17), to remove men’s sins and transform their characters. At His second advent He will come to reign over them as King (see on Matt. 25:31).

Counsel of peace. This phrase describes the agreement between the Father and the Son for the salvation of man (see 8T 269; GC 416, 417).

14. Crowns. Or, “crown.”

Helem. Probably the same as “Heldai” (v. 10).

Tobijah. See on v. 10.

Jedaiah. See on v. 10.

To Hen. Literally, “to [or for] the grace [or favor] of the son of Zephaniah.” The LXX reads “for the favor of the son of Sophonias [Zephaniah].”

15. That are far off. These are the Gentiles who would join the Messianic kingdom (see Isa. 11:9; 57:13). With the complete failure of literal Israel, God is now accomplishing His purposes through the Christian church (see Eph. 2:19–22; 1 Peter 2:3–5; AA 595; see Vol. IV, pp. 28–36).

If ye will. The Jews might have formed the nucleus of God’s spiritual house. However, the promises made to them were conditional, as is here clearly pointed out. Nevertheless, despite man’s failure, God’s purposes will move steadily forward and will be accomplished through those from every nation who constitute His spiritual house today (see pp. 35, 36).

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

12 AA 595; GC 415

12, 13 DA 166; PK 695; 8T 269

13 GC 416, 417; PP 63

15 AA 595

CHAPTER 7

1 *The captives enquire of fasting. 4 Zechariah reproveth their fasting. 8 Sin the cause of their captivity.*

1. It came to pass. Verses 1–3 tell of a delegation from Bethel (see on v. 2) to inquire whether the fast commemorating Jerusalem’s calamity should still be kept.

Fourth year. The date here given may be calculated as approximately Dec. 7, 518 B.C. (see Vol. III, p. 99), about two years after the previous visions had been given (ch. 1:1, 7). Since in about two years more the Temple was finished (see Ezra 6:15), the work

of rebuilding was doubtless well advanced. The priests were already “in the house of the Lord” (see Zech. 7:3). Because of this optimistic prospect the question naturally arose as to whether a fast instituted under sorrowful conditions should still be observed.

Darius. Darius I (see Vol. III, pp. 70–72).

2. The house of God. Heb. *beth-’el*, which may be translated, “Bethel.” The opening part of the verse reads literally, “and Bethel sent,” meaning, probably, “they of Bethel sent.”

Sherezzer. A Babylonian name corresponding to the Akkadian *Shar-ušur*. A son and murderer of Sennacherib bore this name (2 Kings 19:37). The foreign name indicates that Sherezzer was born in exile.

Their men. Presumably the deputies’ assistants.

To pray. From the Heb. *chalah*, “to become weak,” “to become ill.” However, in the form here found the word is used in a good sense, as to soften by patting the face, to put in a gentle mood; and so follows the meaning, “to make one pleasant.” The phrase may be translated “to entreat God’s favor.”

3. Priests. These were to be interpreters of the Law (see Haggai 2:11).

In the house. See on v. 1.

Prophets. Doubtless Haggai and Zechariah and probably others.

Should I weep? The fast (see v. 5) here referred to commemorated the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar in the fifth month, 586 B.C. (2 Kings 25:8, 9; Jer. 52:12–14). See on ch. 8:19.

Separating myself. That is, abstaining from food and pleasures.

4. Word of the Lord. The answer is given in several parts, each introduced by this characteristic formula (see v. 8; ch. 8:1).

5. All the people. The answer was of concern to all, not to those of Bethel only.

Seventh month. According to tradition this fast commemorated the murder of Gedaliah (see 2 Kings 25:22–26).

Seventy years. From 586 B.C., the year of the destruction of Jerusalem (2 Kings 25:1–4), to the present date (see on Zech. 7:1) was approximately 70 years (see Vol. III, pp. 99, 100). That is, if reckoned by a fall-to-fall year, it was 587/586 to 518/517, 70 years inclusive (see Vol. III, p. 99).

Unto me. The fasts were a human invention and fulfilled no divine command. Evidently they were not prompted by true repentance for the sins that had brought destruction to the city and country.

6. For yourselves. That is, apart from thought of God (see 1 Cor. 11:17–22).

7. Should ye not hear? The opening part of the verse should probably be rendered as in the LXX, “Are not these the words?” Repeatedly “the former prophets” had warned against putting confidence in the observance of outward ceremonies alone (1 Sam. 15:22; Prov. 21:3; etc.).

In prosperity. The contrast between the Israelites’ former prosperity and their present low estate was a sad reminder of what they had lost through disobedience.

South. Negeb (see on Joshua 15:19).

Plain. The Shephelah (see on Joshua 15:33). The Negeb and the Shephelah formed two of the three parts of Judea, the third being “the mountainous” region about Jerusalem (see on Judges 1:9).

9. Execute true judgment. The prophet enumerates various aspects of moral righteousness such as had been frequently enjoined (see Ex. 23:6–8; Isa. 32:7; Jer. 22:3; Micah 2:1, 2).

10. Oppress not. See Ex. 22:22–24; Deut. 10:18, 19; Jer. 7:5, 6; Isa. 58:5–7.

11. Pulled away the shoulder. As an ox that shies away from a yoke being placed upon its neck (see Neh. 9:29; Hosea 4:16).

Stopped their ears. They were altogether indifferent to the will of God.

12. Adamant stone. Heb. *shamir*, a stone of great hardness, possibly emery (see on Eze. 3:9). A heart of stone is unimpressionable. The strongest appeals awakened no response. The action was deliberate, an act of the will. “They *made* their hearts.”

Law. Heb. *torah*, “instruction” (see on Prov. 3:1).

13. He cried. That is, the Lord. The severe chastisements that befell the people might have been avoided. When it became evident that the discipline of the Exile would be necessary in order to effect moral reform, cries for removal of the chastisement went unheeded (see PK 292; Isa. 65:12–14; 66:4).

14. I scattered them. Disobedience and apostasy resulted in the Babylonian captivity.

They knew not. Compare Deut. 28:33, 49; Jer. 16:13.

Desolate. See Jer. 9:9–16.

Pleasant land. See Deut. 8:7–10; Ps. 106:24; Jer. 3:19; Eze. 20:6.

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

8–146T 460

9, 10 PK 704

CHAPTER 8

1 *The restoration of Jerusalem.* 9 *They are encouraged to the building by God’s favour to them.* 16 *Good works are required of them.* 18 *Joy and enlargement are promised.*

1. Again the word. Verses 1–8 describe God’s promise to dwell with His people in a restored, fully populated Jerusalem.

2. Thus saith the Lord. This formula appears 10 times in ch. 8. The repetition certifies the reliability of the divine promises. In every instance but one (v. 3) the more complete form, “Thus saith the Lord of hosts,” occurs.

Jealous for Zion. Compare Joel 2:18.

3. Returned. The fact that the restoration of the city and of the Temple were now in progress, indicated that God had come back to His people (see ch. 2:10). However, the verb translated “am returned” may also be rendered as a future (see LXX; RSV). What had thus far been accomplished was only the beginning of what God purposed to do for Jerusalem.

Truth. Heb. *’emeth*, “firmness,” “trustworthiness,” “dependability,” “stability,” “faithfulness,” “truth.” Hence the reading “the faithful city” (RSV). The LXX reads “the true [genuine] city.”

Holy mountain. Here used synonymously with Jerusalem (see Isa. 27:13; 66:20).

4. There shall yet. Verses 4–15 describe Jerusalem as it might have been through the centuries (see pp. 27–30). It was God’s design that the Israel of the restoration should accept the glorious destiny long ago planned for them. Had they been willing to work in harmony with the purposes of Heaven, the temporal prosperity and spiritual power here described would have been theirs to enjoy. Jerusalem “might have stood forth in the pride

of prosperity, the queen of kingdoms, free in the strength of her God-given power” (DA 577). However, the promises were “conditional on obedience” (PK 704), and Israel failed to fulfill the divine purpose (see Vol. IV. pp. 30–33).

For very age. Literally, “from a multitude of days.” Longevity would have been the reward for obedience (see Gen. 15:15; Ex. 20:12; Deut. 4:40; Ps. 91:16; see on Isa. 65:20; see also p. 27). An early death was considered a punishment for sin (see Ps. 55:23).

5. Boys and girls. A sign of a healthy growth in population and of restored security (see Hosea 1:10).

6. Marvellous. From the Heb. *pala’*, which may be translated “to be too difficult” (see Gen. 18:14; Deut. 17:8; etc.). Thus understood, there is a rebuke here for lack of faith. If Israel lacked the necessary faith, what God planned to do would be “too difficult” for Him. On the other hand, *pala’* also means “to be different,” “to be conspicuous,” “to be curious,” hence the translation “marvellous.”

7. I will save. God will “save” His scattered people and “bring” (v. 8) them again to their own land. Once more they will “dwell” in peace and security and “be my people” (v. 8).

The east country. The two directions mentioned in this verse may symbolize universal extent (see Ps. 50:1; Mal. 1:11; Matt. 8:11).

8. My people. A pledge that the covenant would be renewed (see Jer. 31:33).

9. Hands be strong. A charge to be courageous (see Judges 7:11; Isa. 35:3).

In these days. The then present time contrasted with the time of the “former prophets” (ch. 7:7). The prophets here referred to, Haggai and Zechariah, rallied the returned exiles to the laying of “the foundation” of the Temple and its rebuilding (Ezra 6:14; PK 573–578, 596).

10. Before these days. An allusion to the time of inaction (see Ezra 4) that followed the laying of the first foundation of the Temple after the return from the Captivity. There was “no hire,” that is, no wage, because the land failed to produce, and extreme poverty prevailed (see Haggai 1:11; 2:17).

The state of no “peace” was caused by the opposition of the hostile people of the land to the work of Temple restoration (Ezra 4:4). The words “every one against his neighbour” indicate internal dissensions among the returned Jews in addition to external opposition.

11. I will not be. Because of their new diligence in the work of restoration, God’s attitude toward the “residue” changed (see Haggai 2:18, 19). “As in the former days” refers to the time of inactivity mentioned in v. 10.

12. Prosperous. The crops would be safe from appropriation by the enemy (see Lev. 26:16), and thus “be prosperous” (see Lev. 26:4–6).

13. A curse. See Jer. 24:9.

House of Judah. The fact that both the house of Judah and the house of Israel are mentioned shows that the restoration was to be composed of the descendants of all 12 tribes (see Jer. 50:17–20, 33, 34). That some of each of the 12 tribes had returned seems evident (see on Ezra 6:17).

A blessing. On the role of the Israel of the restoration see pp. 27–30.

14. Repented not. See on ch. 7:13.

15. To do well. Compare Jer. 31:28. The prophet contrasts the past with the future.

16. Ye shall do. The glorious promises were conditional on obedience. Verses 16, 17 lay stress on the moral virtues (see on Micah 6:8). See pp. 27, 28.

19. Fast. Reverting to the original question (see ch. 7:3, 5), God declares that these fasts commemorating earlier calamities would be changed into joyful occasions. The fasts of the “fourth” and “fifth” months (Tammuz and Ab) doubtless commemorated the capture and destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians (see 2 Kings 25:1–9; Jer. 52:12–16); that of the “seventh” month (Tishri), perhaps the murder of Gedaliah and the flight into Egypt (see 2 Kings 25:22–26; Jer. 41:1, 2; cf. Zech. 7:5); and that of the “tenth” month (Tebeth) probably the time when Nebuchadnezzar began the siege of Jerusalem (see 2 Kings 25:1, 2; Jer. 52:4).

20. People. Israel’s goodly estate was to be a demonstration to all nations of the benefits and results of a sincere worship of Yahweh. As a result of the demonstration many from these nations would be led to worship the Lord (see pp. 28, 29).

21. Let us go speedily. Isaiah describes this same movement (see on Isa. 2:2–4).

22. Seek the Lord. Marvelous would have been the results if the Israelites upon their return from exile had fulfilled their glorious destiny. The whole earth would have been prepared for the first advent of Christ (see pp. 29, 30; PK 704).

23. All languages. Representing a universal movement.

Take hold. An illustration further emphasizing the extent of the missionary movement. How tragic that the Israelites turned from their “glorious destiny, and selfishly appropriated to themselves that which would have brought healing and spiritual life to countless multitudes” (PK 705)

The lesson is for the “Israel of God” (Gal. 6:16). God is now accomplishing His purposes through His church on earth (see pp. 35, 36). Its members are to disseminate the light of truth to all nations (Rev. 14:6). In their personal lives they are to make the religion of Jesus Christ so attractive that others will be drawn to surrender their lives to the Saviour. God’s church is now to be a blessing to the world (Zech. 8:13).

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

3, 7, 8, 12, 13 PK 704

13 PK 576

16 ML 233; PK 704

CHAPTER 9

1 *God defendeth his church.* 9 *Zion is exhorted to rejoice for the coming of Christ, and his peaceable kingdom.* 12 *God’s promises of victory and defence.*

1. Burden. Heb. *mašša’*, “a prophetic utterance,” “an oracle” (see on Isa. 13:1).

Hadrach. Probably the *Hattarikka* of the Assyrian inscriptions, a territory of Syria bordering on Hamath.

The rest thereof. That is, Damascus would be the resting place of the “burden”; that is, the message was denunciatory of that city.

When the eyes. The meaning of this expression is not clear. The LXX reads, “For the Lord looks upon men, and upon all the tribes of Israel.” The reading, “For to the Lord belong the cities of Aram” (RSV), requires the change of two letters in the Hebrew that are similar in appearance.

2. Hamath. A city about 118 mi. (189 km.) north by east of Damascus.

Tyrus, and Zidon. For a description of Tyre and for the punishments to be inflicted upon Tyre and Sidon, as set forth in vs. 3, 4, see on Eze. 26 to 28. Zechariah's description closely parallels Ezekiel's more detailed picture.

5. Ashkelon. The downfall of the great city of Tyre would bring dismay and fear upon Tyre's neighbors, the chief cities of Philistia here named. Compare Ezekiel's prophecy against the Philistines (Eze. 25:15–17).

6. Bastard. One born out of wedlock, or one of alien birth (see on Deut. 23:2).

7. His blood. Doubtless a reference to the heathen practice of drinking the blood of sacrifices, or of eating the sacrifices with the blood. The Israelites were strictly forbidden to eat blood (Lev. 17:10, 12).

Abominations. See Isa. 66:3, 17.

For our God. The remnant would forsake their idolatrous practices and join themselves to Israel.

Governor. Heb. *'alluph*. A change in vowel pointing permits the translation "thousand," "family," or "clan" (see Num. 1:16; 10:4; 1 Sam. 10:19). Those who joined themselves to the Lord would become like one of the families or clans of Judah.

Jebusite. The Jebusites were the ancient inhabitants of the stronghold of Zion. The tribe was not entirely destroyed, but was made to serve as bondmen (1 Kings 9:20, 21). It is not entirely clear what the prophet meant by the comparison. Perhaps he was predicting the absorption of the Philistines into the state of Israel.

8. I will encamp. God will defend Israel from her enemies.

Him that passeth by. A reference to the raids of an enemy or to hostile attacks upon various places.

Now have I seen. God now regards Israel's condition and purposes to give her help (see Ex. 3:7, 9).

9. Rejoice greatly. Zion is called upon to rejoice because her promised salvation will be realized through the coming of her King, the Messiah.

Just. Heb. *šaddiq*, a word occurring more than 200 times in the OT. It is generally translated "righteous," less frequently "just." The term is elsewhere used of the Messiah. Jeremiah declared, "I will raise unto David a righteous Branch," who was to be called "the Lord our righteousness [Heb. *šedeq*, from the same root as *šaddiq*]" (Jer. 23:5, 6).

Some see in *šaddiq* also the meaning "triumphant" (see RSV). This idea is derived from the observation that one who receives what is his right is therefore triumphant. Though such a definition is in harmony with the context, it is doubtful that the meaning ought to be thus restricted. Moral righteousness is a prime attribute of the Messiah. In His humanity Christ wrought out a perfect character, and this He offers to impart to all who accept Him by faith. "All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6). But Jesus was made unto us "wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. 1:30).

Salvation. From the Heb. *yasha'*, "to save." *Yasha'* is the root word of the name "Jesus" (see on Matt. 1:1, 21).

Lowly. On this attribute of the Messiah see Matt. 11:29; Phil. 2:5–8.

Upon an ass. For a fulfillment of this prediction see on Matt. 21:1–11.

10. Cut off. A forecast of the ultimate abolition of war. Ephraim and Jerusalem represent respectively the ten tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel and the two tribes comprising the southern kingdom of Judah, both comprehending the entire Jewish nation.

Unto the heathen. Or, “unto the nations.” All enemy opposition to the people of Israel would eventually be put down (Joel 3:1–17; Zech. 14:1–9; see p. 30).

Ends of the earth. An indication of the universal sway of Messiah’s kingdom (see p. 30).

11. As for thee. God addresses His covenant people.

Covenant. Probably in its larger aspects a reference to the covenant made with man in Eden (Gen. 3:15), and renewed to Abraham (Gen. 22:18). This covenant became known as the new covenant (Heb. 8:8–12; PP 370, 371).

I have sent forth. Or, “I will send forth.” A reference to the Israelites still captive in foreign lands.

12. Turn you. The divine appeal to the prisoners scattered abroad to accept deliverance. The stronghold is Zion, defended by God and symbolical of His salvation (see Micah 4:8).

Prisoners of hope. The returned exiles thought themselves to be the prisoners of circumstance, but God assures them that there is hope of deliverance—if they are diligent in obeying His voice (ch. 6:15; see on Matt. 7:24–27).

Even to day. In the face of untoward conditions.

Double. Compare Isa. 61:7.

13. Bent Judah. God as a warrior ready for battle employs Judah as His bow, and Ephraim (Israel) as His arrow.

Raised up. The clause reads literally, “I will rouse.”

Greece. Here probably a symbol of the countries to which the Jews had been driven (see Joel 3:6).

14. Shall be seen. The intervention of Jehovah is thus poetically described. Compare Ps. 18:14.

Whirlwinds. Compare Job 37:9.

15. Defend them. The poetic description of v. 14 is continued. The imagery is intensely dramatic. The slaughter of the enemies is compared to a sacrifice and the attackers are pictured as drunk with the blood of their victims.

16. Save them. The tables would be turned. Those who had been downtrodden and oppressed would glitter as the precious stones of a crown.

Lifted up as an ensign. Literally, “glitter,” “twinkle.”

17. His goodness. Or, “his good.” The Lord, the mighty Deliverer, is extolled (see DA 26).

Corn. Grain and new wine represent productive abundance. The needs of life will be provided in abundance when God restores His people to their inheritance.

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

9 DA 569, 575, 592; EW 244; GC 405

12 FE 290, 370; MM 335; PK 260, 378; 1T 268; 2T 510; 4T 633; 6T 145, 279, 418; 8T 12, 21, 124

15, 16 AA 86

16 COL 118; MB 89; 6T 309

16, 17 DA 26

CHAPTER 10

1 *God is to be sought unto, and not idols. 5 As he visited his flock for sin, so he will save and restore them.*

1. Of the Lord. Zechariah shows that if God's people are to receive the promised blessings, they must seek them from the Lord, not from idols (v. 2). The assurance of abundance (ch. 9:17) prompts the prophet to appeal to his people to trust in God alone for their material and spiritual benefits.

Latter rain. This rain came in the spring, at the close of the rainy season, and was needed to mature the grain before the harvest (see Deut. 11:14). The early rain began the rainy season, in the fall, to promote the growth of the seed just sown (see Vol. II, p. 108). Copious rains early and late were a token of God's care and favor, His temporal and spiritual blessings (see Isa. 30:2; Jer. 5:24; Joel 2:23).

Bright clouds. Heb. *chazizim*, "thunderclouds." The figure of the latter rain is used to describe the special outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the last days (see on Joel 2:23). It is now the "time of the latter rain," when men ought to send up earnest petitions that the spiritual grace that prepares the church for the coming of the Son of man may speedily be realized (see AA 55; TM 506).

2. Idols. Heb. *teraphim*, household gods usually in the form of small human figurines (see on Gen. 31:19).

Vanity. Futile, utterly worthless responses.

Diviners. Those who pretended to reveal the will of the gods (see Jer. 29:8).

Went their way. Confidence in these deceivers caused the Israelites to be led into captivity.

No shepherd. Probably a reference to their having no king to lead and protect them (see Hosea 3:4).

3. The shepherds. The context seems to imply that these false shepherds were the apostate leaders of Israel, the princes, priests, and prophets whom God held chiefly accountable for all the woe that had come upon Israel in connection with the Captivity (Isa. 3:12; 9:16; cf. Jer. 2:8, 26, 27; 8:1, 2; 10:21; 32:32; Eze. 22:23–31; Eze. 34:2–10; etc.). In Zech. 11:15, 17, it is implied that these false shepherds had abandoned their flock, and in ch. 10:2 the people of Israel are represented as sheep going astray because they have no shepherd to lead them in the right way (cf. Jer. 5:1–5; Eze. 34:5; etc.).

Others have suggested that the "shepherds" represent the heathen kings who ruled the Israelites during the time they had "no shepherd" (v. 2) of their own. God had used these heathen "shepherds" as His instruments to chastise His people (see Isa. 10:5, 6), but they had exercised undue cruelty toward His people.

Goats. Heb. *'attudim*, "he-goats" (Gen. 31:10, 12; Deut. 32:14), also used metaphorically of leaders, for example, here and in Isa. 14:9.

His flock. God will visit His flock in blessing and will make His people strong to overcome their foes (see ch. 9:13).

4. Corner. Or, "cornerstone," or, perhaps, "corner tower." The various figures emphasize Judah's steadfastness and security. The Jews regarded this verse as a Messianic prediction.

Nail. Compare Isa. 22:23.

5. *Mighty men.* The presence of God would ensure the chosen people of complete triumph over their enemies. These promises of victory were “conditional on obedience” (PK 704) and were never realized by Israel because of their persistent refusal to fulfill the divine purpose.

6. *House of Judah.* The southern kingdom (see 1 Kings 11:31, 32).

House of Joseph. The ten tribes comprising the northern kingdom of Israel are thus named because the most numerous and prominent of the northern tribes was that of Ephraim, a son of Joseph (Gen. 41:50–52).

As though. To the returned exiles God promised restoration full and free. If they had cooperated with the purposes of Heaven, they soon would have enjoyed a prosperity not to be distinguished from that which it had been their privilege earlier to obtain (see pp. 31, 32).

Thus it may be with the sinner. Though guilty of grievous transgression, he may obtain pardon full and free. When, by faith, he accepts the righteousness of Christ, he is accepted before God as if he had not sinned (see SC 62).

7. *They of Ephraim.* That is, those of the northern kingdom. Because of their sin the ten tribes were “given no promise of complete restoration to their former power in Palestine” (PK 298). However, a glorious destiny awaited those among these tribes who would join themselves to the Lord and unite with the remnant of Judah.

8. *Hiss.* Or, “whistle.” The LXX renders the opening clause, “I will make a sign to them.”

9. *Sow.* Heb. *zara’*, often used in the sense of scatter, and doubtless so here. The opening clause may be translated “though I scattered them” (RSV).

10. *Egypt.* See Jer. 43; 44 concerning the Jews who dwelt in Egypt.

Assyria. Here representing the territory of Assyria now held by Persia (see on Ezra 6:22).

Gilead and Lebanon. Countries on the eastern and northern boundaries of Israel, which were first depopulated (2 Kings 15:29; see on 1 Chron. 5:26).

11. *Through the sea.* A reference to the miracle of the Red Sea (Ex. 14). God would again be willing to work miraculously in the deliverance of His people.

River. Heb. *ye’or*, frequently designating the Nile (Ex. 1:22; 2:3; etc.; see on Ex. 2:10). However, *ye’or* may also apply to other streams. In Dan. 12:5–7 it refers to the Tigris. Some think it here refers to the Euphrates, which the exiles who returned from Babylon would cross on their way to Jerusalem. Others, by a consideration of the parallelism, think that the Nile is meant.

Brought down. Punishment would be visited upon those nations that had held God’s people captive (see Isa. 10:12; 13:1–22; Eze. 29 to 32; etc.).

12. *Walk up and down.* Or, simply, “walk,” as the same verb form is rendered in Gen. 5:22. The LXX reads “glory,” which necessitates the change of one letter in the Hebrew. Compare Micah 4:5.

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

1 AA 55; Ev 701; EW 271; ML 60; MM 335; TM 506; 5T 214; 8T 21

11 PK 366

CHAPTER 11

1 *The destruction of Jerusalem.* 3 *The elect being cared for, the rest are rejected.* 10 *The staves of Beauty and Bands broken by the rejection of Christ.* 15 *The type and curse of a foolish shepherd.*

1. Open thy doors. There is considerable difference of opinion as to how the symbolism of ch. 11 should be interpreted. The language is so highly figurative and the prophet has offered so little explanation that it is impossible to be dogmatic as to its teachings. Two principal views concerning it have been held: (1) That the passage is a forecast of the punishment to fall upon the Jews for their rejection of God's leadership, especially of the Messiah. (2) That the passage is a review of Israel's past history put into parabolic form to warn them of what future transgression might bring. The latter view is here briefly presented as illustrative of a possible interpretation. At the same time the view that the chapter is predictive—that is, insofar as it is a warning of Israel's fate if the people reject their present and future leadership—has much to commend it.

Verses 1–3 have been variously understood. Among the views held are the following: (1) That they forecast a continuation of the desolation for some time to come before the glorious prospect of ch. 10:5–12 will be realized. (2) That they represent a warning of the punishment that will inevitably result from further disobedience and apostasy. (3) That they are a lament over the fall of Assyria and Egypt, whose humiliation was predicted in ch. 10:11. (4) That they are a review of the desolations that had already occurred and of their causes, as a warning to the present generation.

Cedars. Invasions were frequently accompanied by a wanton destruction of valuable timber. However, here, the cedar, fir (cypress), and the oak are probably used metaphorically of prominent leaders or of the nations themselves.

3. The howling of the shepherds. For comment see on ch. 10:3.

Pride. Heb. *ga'on*, here probably the thick growth that lined the banks of the Jordan, and that at one time was infested by lions (see on Jer. 12:5).

4. Feed. God commands the prophet, as His representative, to tend His flock.

Of the slaughter. That is, destined for slaughter. Untended, such would be the doom of the flock.

5. Possessors. That is, the evil shepherds of v. 3, who were making traffic of them and yet had the audacity to bless the Lord for their good fortune in so doing (v. 5). Blinded by their own self-interest, they did not consider themselves guilty when they sinfully mistreated the flock.

6. I will deliver. These oppressors would be delivered into the hands of other nations, who in turn would oppress them. God holds the leaders accountable for their treatment of His children (see Isa. 10:5–7, 12; see on Dan. 4:17).

7. I will feed. Better, "I fed."

Beauty. Heb. *no'am*, "friendliness," "kindness." The word is related to the Ugaritic *n'm*, meaning "grace," that is, in the sense of "charm," "loveliness," *No'am* occurs in the OT seven times and is translated "beauty" four times (Ps. 27:4; 90:17; Zech. 11:7, 10), "pleasant" twice (Prov. 15:26; 16:24), and "pleasantness" once (Prov. 3:17). Inasmuch as the breaking of the staff represents the breaking of the covenant (Zech. 11:10), the staff may be considered a symbol of the covenant.

Bands. Heb. *chobelim*, related to the word *chebel*, meaning “cord,” or “rope.” Hence *chobelim* properly represents “a union.” According to v. 14 this staff represented the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.

God entered into solemn covenant relationship with His people (Ex. 19:5, 6; 24:3–8). It was His purpose that as a holy, united nation the Israelites would be a blessing in the world (see Gen. 12:2; see also pp. 27–30.) The two staves symbolized God’s gracious purposes with respect to His people.

8. Three shepherds. It is impossible with any degree of certainty to apply these to any specific individuals or offices. It appears best to understand this text in its general teaching; namely, that God delivered His people from all opposition and from oppressive leadership. He did everything possible in order that His plans with respect to Israel might succeed (see on Isa. 5:4; Zech. 10:3).

9. I will not feed you. God took this attitude when the people persistently refused to accept His leadership (see 2 Kings 18:12; 2 Chron. 36:14–16).

10. Cut it asunder. This symbolical act represented the breaking of the covenant (see on v. 7).

11. Knew. The audacious and skeptical among the people had questioned the fulfillment of the divine threats. See on Eze. 11:3 for an example of such an attitude. The fulfillment of the predictions certified the integrity of the divine word.

12. Give me my price. Speaking in the person of the Chief Shepherd, Zechariah addressed the entire flock of the Israelites, requesting of them his wages. The question highlighted the gross ingratitude of the people. The prophet left the payment of his wages to their sense of justice.

Thirty pieces of silver. Doubtless shekels are meant, making the weight (at .4 oz. avoirdupois, or 11.4 gr., per shekel) 12 oz. avoirdupois or 342 gr. (see Vol. I, p. 168). This very small amount reflected the Israelites’ contemptuous thankfulness for what God had done for them. Thirty shekels was the price of a slave (Ex. 21:32). However, the more ancient shekel differed in weight from the one in use in the time of Zechariah (see Vol. I, p. 168; see on Ex. 21:32).

For the fulfillment of vs. 12, 13 in the experience of our Lord see on Matt. 27:3–10.

13. Cast it unto the potter. The reason is not given, nor is it stated why the gift was made “in the house of the Lord.” A change of one letter in the Hebrew gives the reading “treasury” instead of “potter” (see RSV). “Treasury” is also the reading of the Syriac. Some understand the words “cast it unto the potter” as merely an expression to denote the contemptuous rejection of the “pieces of silver” when they were brought to the treasury of the Temple.

14. Cut asunder. The meaning of this symbolical act is immediately explained (see on v. 7). On the disruption of the kingdom see 1 Kings 11:26–37; 12:13–20.

15. Take unto thee. Because God’s people had rejected the Good Shepherd, Zechariah is charged (see v. 4) to assume the role and take the “instruments” of a foolish (Heb. *’ewili*, “awkward,” “useless”) shepherd.

16. Eat the flesh. A graphic symbolical representation of the experience that came to Israel when, having rejected God’s leadership, they forfeited the divine protection, and the nation became the prey of hostile nations.

17. Idol. Heb. *'elil*, “nothingness,” “of no value.” The word frequently denotes idols. Some think the Hebrew should read *'ewili*, as in v. 15 (see comments there).

The sword. A solemn warning to those who assume leadership of the flock, lest they be found unfaithful to the trust committed to them.

CHAPTER 12

1 Jerusalem a cup of trembling to herself, 3 and a burdensome stone to her adversaries. 6 The victorious restoring of Judah. 9 The repentance of Jerusalem.

1. Burden. Chapters 12–14 constitute the second “burden,” or oracle (see on ch. 9:1). This prophetic message may be entitled “The triumph of God’s program.”

2. Cup of trembling. That is, a cup whose contents produce trembling. Compare similar figures in Isa. 51:17; Jer. 25:15–18; 51:57; Hab. 2:16.

The siege. See p. 30; see on ch. 14:2.

3. Burdensome stone. Better, “a heavy stone.” Jerusalem would be like a boulder too heavy to lift and, apparently, one with rough, jagged edges.

Cut in pieces. Heb. *śarat*, a verb occurring elsewhere only in Lev. 21:5, where it describes the making of voluntary incisions such as were forbidden to the Israelites. The Hebrew construction is emphatic, meaning, “severely cut.” God’s special protection would be upon His people. Those who attempted to hurt them would themselves be hurt.

4. I will smite. These words must have been especially comforting to Zerubbabel and his associates at a time when the future appeared dark and the enemy was seeking to halt the work of God (see Haggai 2:22; see also p. 30).

6. Governors. Heb. *'alluphim*. A slightly different vowel pointing (see Vol. I, p. 25) gives the reading *'alaphim*, which may be translated “thousands” (1 Sam. 10:19), or “clans” (RSV). See on Micah 5:2. Encouraged by the evidences of God’s protective power, the clans of Judah would enlarge their borders and occupy all the territory God had assigned them (see Vol. IV, pp. 29, 30).

Hearth. Heb. *kiyyor*, “a pot,” for washing (Ex. 30:18; etc.), or, for cooking (1 Sam. 2:14); here, connected with “fire,” a fire pot.

7. Do not magnify. As a result of the exaltation of the rural areas the glory of the territories of provincial Judah would equal that of the capital city, Jerusalem itself.

8. As David. These promises of conquering might were to have met fulfillment in the remnant of Judah. It was hoped that after their return from captivity they would cooperate fully with the purposes of Heaven. A nation thus stayed upon God is invincible. The individual, too, may claim these promises in his battles against temptation and in his conquests for the Lord (see DA 250, 251).

On the application of this prophecy to the Christian church see Vol. IV, pp. 35, 36; AA 48.

9. Seek to destroy. A further assurance of victory over all enemy opposition.

10. Grace. Heb. *chen*, a word with two basic shades of meaning: (1) “qualities that make one agreeable,” “charm” (Prov. 11:16; 22:1); (2) “favour,” found frequently in the expression “to find favor,” also translated “to find grace” (Gen. 18:3; 19:19; 32:5; etc.). *Chen* comes from the root *chanan*, which means “to be gracious.”

Supplications. Heb. *tachanunim*, from the root *chanan*. The word translated “grace” (see above under “Grace”) is also from this root. *Tachanunim* means, “petitions for favor.”

The prediction concerning the pouring out of “the spirit of grace and of supplications” has been variously understood. The expression “spirit of grace” may be interpreted as signifying a spirit seeking for favor. If such is its meaning, the second expression “[spirit] of supplications” is essentially in apposition to the first, and the phrases may be expressed as follows, “a spirit seeking for favor,” that is, “a spirit petitioning favor.” Understood in this way the prophet is here envisioning a far-reaching spiritual revival, brought about by a new glimpse of the sinfulness of sin, and characterized by an earnest search for the righteousness of Christ. Looking upon the “pierced” Messiah, seeing in Him the fulfillment of all the OT types, perceiving as never before the marvelous love of God in the gift of His Son, men would deeply mourn over their past defects of character.

The mourning “as one mourneth for his only son” may also be in grief over the death of the Messiah, a grief such as a nation prepared to receive Messiah would have experienced. Zechariah is here presenting Israel’s future as it might have been. It was God’s design that the whole earth should be prepared for the first advent of Christ (see PK 704). How different would have been the history of the Jewish nation and of Jerusalem if the people had accepted the gift of God’s beloved Son (see DA 576, 577)! Had He come to a nation thus prepared to receive Him, and had He suddenly been “pierced,” how deep their grief would have been! The poignancy of their grief would have been heightened by the realization that their own sins had caused His death.

However, the words are to meet yet another fulfillment. There seems to be an allusion to Zech. 12:10 in Matt. 24:30, “and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory,” and in Rev. 1:7, “Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him.” The word translated “wail” in Rev. 1:7 is the same as the one translated “mourn” in Matt. 24:30, and represents the reading of the LXX in Zech. 12:10. The mourning here described pictures the experience of those who rejected Christ at His first advent. When they shall see Him in all His glory at the second advent, they will realize the full import of their deed (see DA 580). Doubtless “the most violent opposers of His truth and His people” (GC 637) in other ages are also to be included in the prediction here made. See also EW 179.

Pierced. Heb. *daqar*. The word is frequently used of thrusting through with a weapon (Num. 25:8; Judges 9:54; 1 Sam. 31:4; 1 Chron. 10:4). John notes that this scripture was fulfilled when one of the Roman soldiers pierced the side of Jesus (John 19:37).

11. Hadadrimmon. A compound of two names for the same Semitic god, Hadad and Rimmon. The significance of the term is not clear. Some think Hadadrimmon was a place in the valley near Megiddo and that the reference is to the death of Josiah, who received mortal wounds when he attacked Necho, king of Egypt, in the valley of Megiddo. The death of the king resulted in special mourning (2 Chron. 35:20–25). Various attempts have been made to identify the place, but without success. Others think that “the mourning of Hadadrimmon” refers to some pagan rite. The fact that the composite name

Hadadrimmon is made up of two names of a pagan deity may lend some support to the latter view.

12. Every family apart. The enumeration of the various families in vs. 12, 13, ending in the expression “all the families that remain” (v. 14), conveys the picture of universal mourning. “The house of David” represents the royal family. Nathan was the son of David (1 Chron. 3:5). He may here be singled out because Zerubbabel was a descendant of David through Nathan (Luke 3:27, 31). The Levites represent the spiritual leaders. As in the case of the house of David, one prominent family is mentioned—the family of Nathan. Concerning the family of Shimei, see Num. 3:17, 18, 21.

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

8 AA 48; COL 120; MB 63; 5T 81; 6T 42; 8T 20

10 DA 580

CHAPTER 13

1 *The fountain of purgation for Jerusalem, 2 from idolatry, and false prophecy. 7 The death of Christ, and the trial of a third part.*

1. In that day. A special reference to the day of the Messiah already mentioned in ch. 12:10. The coming of the Redeemer would, in a special way, call men’s attention to God’s provision for sin. There had always been a fountain open. By faith in a Saviour to come men had ever been able to obtain forgiveness of sin. But they had largely ignored the provision for salvation. Now a new invitation was to be given.

2. Cut off. Verses 2–5 predict the purification of the land from idols and false prophets. The abhorrence with which false prophets will be held is graphically illustrated by the invoking of a law similar to the ancient code concerning certain apostate children (Deut. 13:6–10; cf. Deut. 18:20). Israel had been especially plagued by false prophets (Jer. 23:9–40; Eze. 13:1–23). In the new economy that God proposed to establish following the first advent of the Messiah it was of especial importance that all false religious teachers be removed and their misleading declarations silenced.

False prophets and false religious teachers have since ancient times been the plague of the church of God and will continue to be till the end of time (Matt. 24:24; 2 Thess. 2:9, 10; Rev. 13:13, 14). The only security against their delusive teachings is to have the mind thoroughly fortified with the truths of the Bible (see on Eze. 22:25).

6. In thine hands. Literally, “between thy hands.” Some interpret this phrase as meaning “back” (RSV), comparing it with the expression “between his arms” (2 Kings 9:24), meaning, apparently, “back.” The arrow that smote Jehoram between his arms came out at the heart. However, the word there is “arms” (Heb. *zero'im*) and not hands (Heb. *yadim*), and we cannot be certain that the two expressions are identical in meaning. In its context the question concerning these wounds seems to be addressed to the converted false prophet (Zech. 13:5, 6). Some interpreters have applied this text to Christ as predictive of His scourging and wounds received at the hands of those who should have been His friends (see Matt. 27:26; Mark 14:65; 15:15; Luke 22:63; John 19:1, 17, 18). This must be done by secondary application or by making a break after Zech. 13:5 and by connecting v. 6 with v. 7, which is clearly predictive of Christ (Matt. 26:31).

7. Smite the shepherd. Jesus applied these words to Himself (Matt. 26:31). The sheep were scattered when His disciples fled before He was taken to His trial and death (see Matt. 26:56; John 16:32).

Turn mine hand. This phrase may be understood either in a good sense, as in Isa. 1:25, or in a bad sense, as in Amos 1:8. In the former sense it is an assurance of comfort and protection to His “little ones,” in the latter a prediction that difficulties and distress would extend even to the meek and lowly of the flock.

8. Shall be cut off. Zechariah here gives a forecast of conditions in terms of how events would have occurred had Israel cooperated with the plans and purposes of Heaven (see p. 30). A large number, though not all, would have accepted the Messiah. His death would have been followed by times of great distress, a time of cutting off for those unwilling to accept Him, and a time of purification (v. 9) for those who were His followers. The proportion here given (two thirds cut off and one third left) need not be taken in the absolute sense, though doubtless then as later the majority would refuse God’s proffered salvation (Matt. 22:14).

9. It is my people. With the purified remnant God would re-establish His covenant. Compare Eze. 37:23; Hosea 2:23.

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

- 1 PK 695; PP 413; TM 450; 4T 59, 625; 6T 227
- 6 AA 226; EW 179; SR 430
- 7 DA 483, 686; PK 691
- 9 7T 52, 274

CHAPTER 14

- 1 *The destroyers of Jerusalem destroyed.* 4 *The coming of Christ, and the graces of his kingdom.* 12 *The plague of Jerusalem’s enemies.* 16 *The remnant shall turn to the Lord,* 20 *and their spoils shall be holy.*

1. Behold. Chapter 14 is a description of events in connection with the second coming of the Messiah in terms of how this spectacular event would have come about if the Israelites who returned from captivity had fulfilled their destiny (see p. 30). Inasmuch as they turned again and again from their high privileges and ultimately rejected the Messiah (Acts 3:13–15), God turned from them. He is now accomplishing His purposes through the Christian church (see pp. 35, 36). Care must be exercised when applying the prophecies of Zech. 14 to our day. The principles outlined on pp. 25–38 must be carefully observed in the interpretation of Zech. 14 or else unwarranted conclusions may be drawn. See also on Eze. 38:1.

2. Gather all nations. See p. 30. The picture here is similar to that presented by Joel (see on Joel 3:1, 2). The prosperity of Israel would have excited the enmity of the nations who are here represented as gathered by God against Jerusalem (see Eze. 38:16). However, Zechariah calls attention to a feature of this battle not mentioned by other prophets—the invasion of Judah and Jerusalem would be partially successful.

Not be cut off. The residue not cut off are doubtless the righteous, those brought “through the fire” and refined “as silver” (ch. 13:9). The purpose of permitting the attack to succeed in part seems to be to cut off the sinners from Zion (cf. ch. 13:7–9).

3. Then. That is, after the partial success of the enemy and the removal of the sinners. The picture here parallels that of Joel 3:16 and of Eze. 38:18–23.

4. Mount of Olives. See on Matt. 21:1.

Shall cleave. Verses 4, 5 describe violent physical changes in the earth’s surface to accompany the divine intervention to destroy the enemy nations. The detailed picture is in terms of how these events would have worked out if Jerusalem had stood forever (see

PK 46, 564; DA 577; see on v. 1). Certain features will now be fulfilled at the time the New Jerusalem makes its descent at the end of the millennium. However, not all the details must be so applied (see GC 663).

5. *Ye shall flee.* A change in vowel pointing (see Vol. I, pp. 25, 26) gives the reading “shall be stopped up.” This change has the support of the LXX and the Targums. Either meaning is appropriate to the context.

Mountains. Literally, “my mountains.”

Azal. Heb. *’aşal*. This place cannot be identified. The LXX reads *Iasol*, probably to be identified with the wadi *Yaşûl* flowing into the Kidron. The reading “the side of it” (RSV) for “Azal” requires the addition of the suffix *w*, “of it,” in the Hebrew. The Heb. *’ešel* means “side.”

Earthquake. This is most probably the earthquake referred to in Amos 1:1.

Shall come. The coming of Christ is here foretold in terms of the circumstances mentioned in comments on v. 1. See Rev. 21:2; cf. GC 663 for the application of this prophecy to the postmillennial descent of the New Jerusalem.

Saints. Heb. *qedoshim*, literally, “holy ones.” The word is applied in the OT both to men (Deut. 33:3; etc.) and to angels (see on Job 15:15; cf. Jude 14).

Thee. The LXX and Syriac read “him.”

6. *Clear.* The Hebrew of this verse is obscure. The LXX reads, “In that day there shall not be light or cold or frost.” A slight change in the Hebrew gives the reading “cold” for the word translated “light.” It appears that the absence of cold is the point of emphasis. A change of climatic conditions seems to be foretold. Blighting frosts are banished.

7. *One day.* That is, one “continuous day” (RSV). In its application to the future this verse finds fulfillment in the observation, “for there shall be no night there” (Rev. 21:25; see on Zech. 14:1).

8. *Living waters.* This prophecy parallels that of Eze. 47:1–12 and describes conditions as they might have been (see on Eze. 47:1; Rev. 22:1).

Former sea ... hinder sea. That is, the Dead Sea and the Mediterranean Sea, respectively (see on Num. 3:23).

9. *Shall be king.* This was the climactic event toward which ancient prophets and pious men looked with eager anticipation (see Dan. 7:13, 14; Rev. 11:15).

10. *As a plain.* A prediction of further topographical changes to take place besides those mentioned in v. 4. The region here mentioned had formerly been mountainous.

Geba. A place 53/4 mi. (9.2 km.) northeast of Jerusalem, the modern *Jeba’*, here used to represent the northern extremity of Judah (see on 2 Kings 23:8).

Rimmon. Doubtless En-rimmon, 9 mi. (14.4 km.) north by east from Beersheba, the modern *Khirbet Umm er-Ramāmîn*. The place is here used to designate the southern extremity of Judah. Compare 2 Kings 23:8, where Geba and Beersheba are used to designate the northern and southern extremities.

Benjamin’s gate. Probably the same as the Sheep Gate on the northeast corner of the wall (see Jerusalem and Environs in the Time of Jeremiah, and the Jerusalem Region).

First gate. This gate cannot be positively identified. However, the specifications are sufficiently clear without a knowledge of its location.

Corner gate. Mentioned also in 2 Kings 14:13; Jer. 31:38. Believed to be the gate on the northwest corner of the wall. Zechariah thus indicates the eastern and western limits of the city.

Tower of Hananeel. A tower in the northern wall (see Jerusalem and Environs in the Time of Jeremiah, and the Jerusalem Region).

King's winepresses. These cannot be definitely located, but were doubtless in the southern part of the city, perhaps near the king's garden in the Kidron (see on Neh. 3:15). The tower of Hananeel and the king's wine presses thus designate the northern and southern limits of the city. The picture in the latter part of Zech. 14:10 is of a city fully inhabited.

11. No more utter destruction. If the nation had continued to fulfill her God-given destiny, the city would have stood forever (see p. 30; GC 19; cf. DA 577).

12. The plague. The prophet returns to a discussion of the fate of the nations attacking Jerusalem. The attackers will suffer the scourges of a terrible plague, extraordinarily rapid in its destructiveness. The plague creates a state of frenzy and panic resulting in mutual extermination (v. 13).

14. Fight at Jerusalem. This may also be translated "fight against Jerusalem" (see RSV). According to v. 2 Jerusalem had fallen to the enemy. Even though Yahweh was fighting for Jerusalem (vs. 12, 13), the people, too, had a part to play.

15. Plague of the horse. The same plague that fell upon men (vs. 12, 13) would also fall upon the enemies' beasts of burden and upon their cattle.

16. Shall even go up. The object of the divine blessing upon Israel was to give a demonstration of what God was willing to do for all nations. Overawed by recent happenings and assured of God's willingness to accept the worship of all men, the survivors from the attacking nations would seek the God of Israel and go up year by year to worship at Jerusalem (see p. 30).

Feast of tabernacles. For a description of this feast see on Lev. 23:34, 40. Zechariah describes a stage in the restoration preliminary to the close of probation and the final eradication of sin and sinners, as events would have come to pass had the Jews been faithful (see pp. 29, 30). The same is true of certain passages in Isaiah (see on Isa. 65:17, 20).

17. Will not come up. This verse supports the observation made in the comments on v. 16, that the prophet describes a preliminary stage in the complete restoration of the earth. There is still danger of rebellion, and those who may be rebelliously inclined are warned of the punishment to follow.

18. Egypt. Probably singled out for mention because of its long history of rebellion against God, or simply as an illustration of the experience of all nations. It had doubtless been among the nations attacking Jerusalem (v. 2), and among its survivors there were now worshipers of Jehovah (v. 16). The land of Egypt depended upon the Nile for its irrigation. Lack of rainfall at the headwaters of the river would mean complete economic disaster for the nation.

20. Bells of the horses. The horses are probably those of the travelers to Jerusalem from all lands. Formerly the horses of other nations approaching Jerusalem were often the signal for war. Now the sounds made by the tinkling of the horses' ornaments were welcome music, for they told of bands of worshipers making their way to Jerusalem. The

inscription, “Holiness to the Lord,” formerly borne on the miter of the high priest (Ex. 28:36, 37), was now the motto of the worshipers.

The pots. The mention of the pots and bowls in vs. 20, 21 seems to refer to the necessity of consecrating a large number of vessels because of the large number of worshippers who would come to Jerusalem.

21. The Canaanite. Heb. *kena‘ani*. The word is translated “merchant” in Job 41:6 and Prov. 31:24 and should probably be so rendered here. In an economy in which members from all nations were welcome no one would be excluded because of his nationality. But merchants of the type that Jesus drove out of the Temple (Matt. 21:12) would not be tolerated.

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

- 4 DA 830; EW 17, 51, 53, 291; SR 417; 1T 67 4, 5 GC 663
- 7 PP 237
- 9 GC 663; MB 160; PP 342
- 12 SR 415
- 12, 13 GC 657
- 13 EW 290
- 1

¹Nichol, F. D. (1978). *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary : The Holy Bible with exegetical and expository comment*. Commentary Reference Series (Zec 1:1). Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association.